World weather this week

Description

Here’s a quick snapshot of interesting or unusual weather around the world this week:

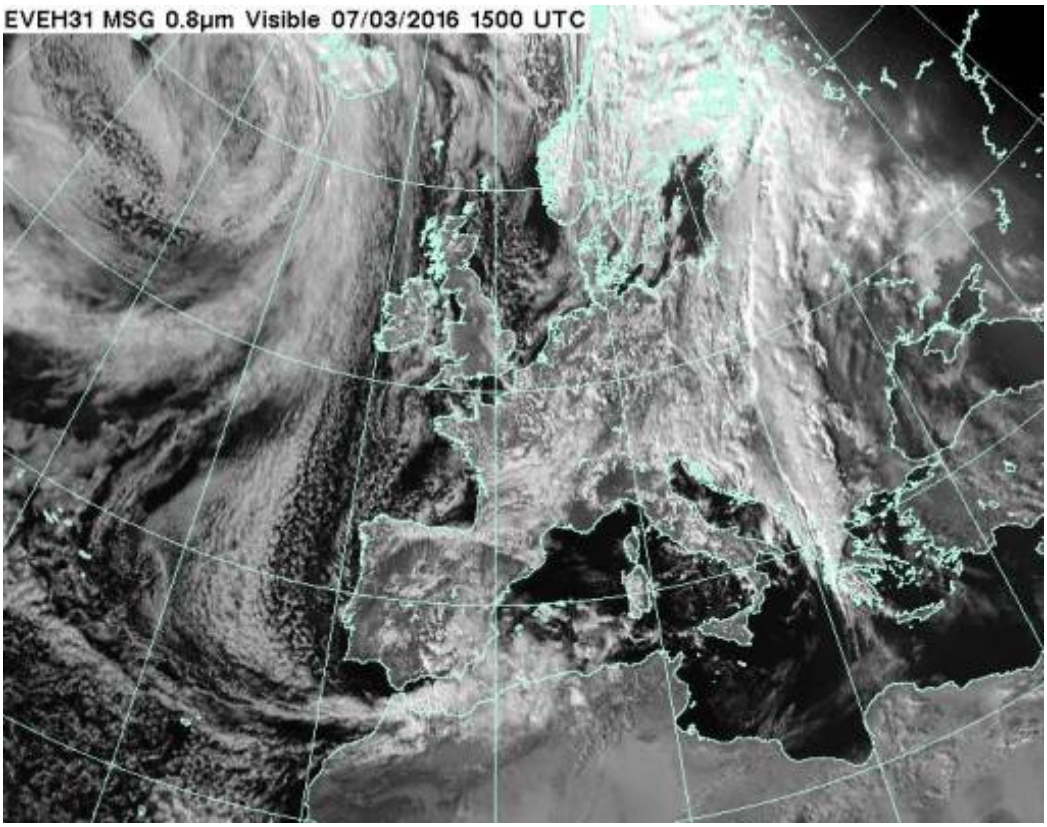
Middle East
Over parts of the United Arab Emirates and Oman heavy rain and thunderstorms were reported last night and are expected to continue over the coming days. By mid-week, places like Dubai are at risk of seeing very heavy rain, with thunderstorms bringing the threat of hail, strong and gusty winds and possible lifted dust. There is a risk of flash floods with possibly as much as 50-100mm of rain falling in the region over the course of one day. Typically in March as a whole, rainfall totals are around 25mm. This weather will likely bring some disruption to aviation in the area.

Europe
For the past week or so, the weather in and around the Mediterranean has been very unsettled, with areas of low pressure bringing periods of rain, thunderstorms and strong winds.

This theme looks like being maintained this week with parts of southeast Europe expected to see some significant rainfall. An active cold front is currently moving slowly across the region. By the end of the day 180-200mm of rain could fall across some locations in Albania and Montenegro, falling as snow over the highest mountains.

The wet weather will progress slowly through southeast Europe over the next 24 hours, bringing the risk of localised flash floods and also some gusty winds in the Aegean Sea. Further rainfall is possible in the area later in the week.

In the western Mediterranean, strong, gusty winds and rough seas will pose a hazard to small craft on Tuesday and Thursday this week as the Mistral blows from southern France across the Gulf of Lion.



Visible satellite image of Europe at 3pm GMT. Image courtesy of MSG.

Africa

In eastern parts of Africa this week, heat stress may cause some impacts on health and water supplies as temperatures are expected to be higher than normal. Parts of Eritrea, southeast Egypt and especially Sudan and Ethiopia could see temperatures up to 10C above the average with daytime highs in excess of 40C possible.

Across southern parts of Africa the seasonal rains have been enhanced by storm activity with recent flash flooding leading to severe impacts to the population in Angola. This heavy rain and thunderstorms are forecast to shift southeastwards over the coming days, moving into Botswana, southern Mozambique and northern parts of South Africa. Some parts in the east of this area will welcome rain after recent wildfires and drought conditions.

Date Created
March 2016

A celebration of women in science and meteorology

Description

Whether it's working at the cutting edge of climate or meteorological science, or forecasting and informing the public and our customers about the changing dynamics of the weather, women are at the heart of the Met Office and meteorology. The Met Office is enormously proud of the contribution that women make every day to the global understanding of weather and climate. And what better day to underline this key role than today, on International Women's Day.

As a leading and progressive scientific organisation the Met Office is committed to gender parity – the theme of this year's International Women's Day. The Met Office is keen to encourage women to understand the vital role they can play in having a career in science.

Professor Dame Julia Slingo is the Met Office chief scientist. Today she is visiting the University of Leicester to open a photographic exhibition: Space Girls Space Women. This exhibition, which was commissioned by the European Space Agency, endeavours to show space through the eyes of female scientists, engineers and students.

Commenting on the opportunities for women in science, she said: "Throughout my career my scientific curiosity has taken me to many unexpected places: from working in deeply academic university research departments to advising the UK government on national emergencies. I have always found the pursuit of research thoroughly enjoyable, and I hope that future generations of women and girls find the same enjoyment in STEM subjects and are able to follow their own curiosity as far as they desire."

Women in meteorology work in a wide variety of roles from climate science to providing on-site forecasting for a variety of customers such as aviation and the ports' industry.

STEM subjects include the disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths, and the Met Office is especially keen to inspire girls to consider high-level careers within these sectors. Felicity Liggins, who is a senior applied climate scientist, takes the STEM lead for the Met Office. She said: "More than half of our Met Office STEM ambassadors are women representing women right across our organisation – from forecasting and research to technology and engineering. We also encourage women working in our business and corporate services teams to get involved in STEM outreach too. We deliver activities such as 'Girls into Maths' days or WISE's 'People Like Me' training – specifically designed to engage girls in STEM subjects and to show them that people like them are happy and successful working in STEM careers and organisations."

The Met Office is aspiring to recruit more women into STEM areas, in particular meteorology and science roles, than ever before and the Met Office is encouraging the progression of females up the career ladder into more senior managerial roles.

One way of trying to recruit more women into the Met Office and meteorology is to engage with local communities. Felicity Liggins added: "With our headquarters on the outskirts of Exeter, we've teamed up with University of Exeter to put on this year's Soapbox Science event in Exeter – a novel public-outreach platform for promoting women scientists and the science they do. Its events transform public areas into an arena for public learning and scientific debate."

Soapbox Science (Exeter) will be held in the city's Princesshay on 11 June 2016. Other Soapbox Science events will be taking place across the UK from Swansea and London to Edinburgh.

As a member of the World Meteorological Organization, the Met Office works with other partner organisations around the world. Encouraging global gender parity is a key part of our international development work.

Claudia Riedl, of Austria, is one of a number of women in science and meteorology featured in the World Meteorological Organization's Flickr page

To see the breadth of meteorological and science work undertaken by women around the globe, please view the World Meteorological Organization's Flickr page.

Date Created
March 2016

Severe gales, but why was it #stormwithnoname?

Description

Last night, a deep area of low pressure moved across southern England and is now weakening as it continues eastwards.

As expected, the system brought heavy rain and widespread northwesterly gales across south Wales and southwest England. Severe gales were experienced locally in more exposed areas with wind gusts of 60-70mph, locally higher.

Wind gust speeds midnight to 3pm Wednesday 9 March:

Site	Area	Gust (mph)
BERRY HEAD	DEVON	91
NEEDLES OLD BATTERY	ISLE OF WIGHT	82
ISLE OF PORTLAND	DORSET	69
CULDROSE	CORNWALL	68
ABERPORTH	DYFED	68
PLYMOUTH, MOUNTBATTEN	DEVON	67
SCILLY: ST MARYS AIRPORT	ISLES OF SCILLY	63
CAMBORNE	CORNWALL	63
NORTH WYKE	DEVON	63
CARDINHAM, BODMIN	CORNWALL	62

Rainfall totals were in the order of 20-30mm with as much as 40mm possible once the rain clears later today. These figures are consistent with our forecasts and the severe weather warnings issued yesterday.

Rainfall totals 10pm Tuesday 8 March to 10am Wednesday 9 March:

Site	Area	Total (mm)
STOWE	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	36.0
WINCHCOMBE, SUDELEY CASTLE	GLOUCESTERSHIRE	35.4
PERSHORE COLLEGE	HEREFORD & WORCESTER	34.6
CHURCH LAWFORD	WARWICKSHIRE	34.6
LARKHILL	WILTSHIRE	34.4
WESTONBIRT	GLOUCESTERSHIRE	33.4
SOUTH NEWINGTON	OXFORDSHIRE	33.0
LITTLE RISSINGTON	GLOUCESTERSHIRE	32.4

FILTON	AVON	31.6
ASTWOOD BANK	HEREFORD & WORCESTER	31.2
NORTHAMPTON, MOULTON PARK	NORTHAMPTONSHIRE	31.2
WELLESBOURNE	WARWICKSHIRE	30.8
BRIZE NORTON	OXFORDSHIRE	30.4
USK	MONMOUTHSHIRE	30.0

A full impact assessment has not yet been completed, but the information gathered so far show the wind impacts to be of a level consistent with the yellow warning for low impacts issued yesterday.

Interestingly, the winds overnight were from a cold northerly direction, which is very different to the prevailing southwesterly that make up the majority of our strong winds here in the UK. This may be why the wind today has been more noticeable than normal.

The winds and their impact have generated some interest in southwest England on social media under #stormwithnoname. The Met Office, together with Met Éireann is running a pilot project 'Name our Storms' to help raise awareness of severe weather. Storms are named by the Met Office when medium or high impacts are forecast as a result of high winds. As this weather system was not expected to meet this criteria it was not named.

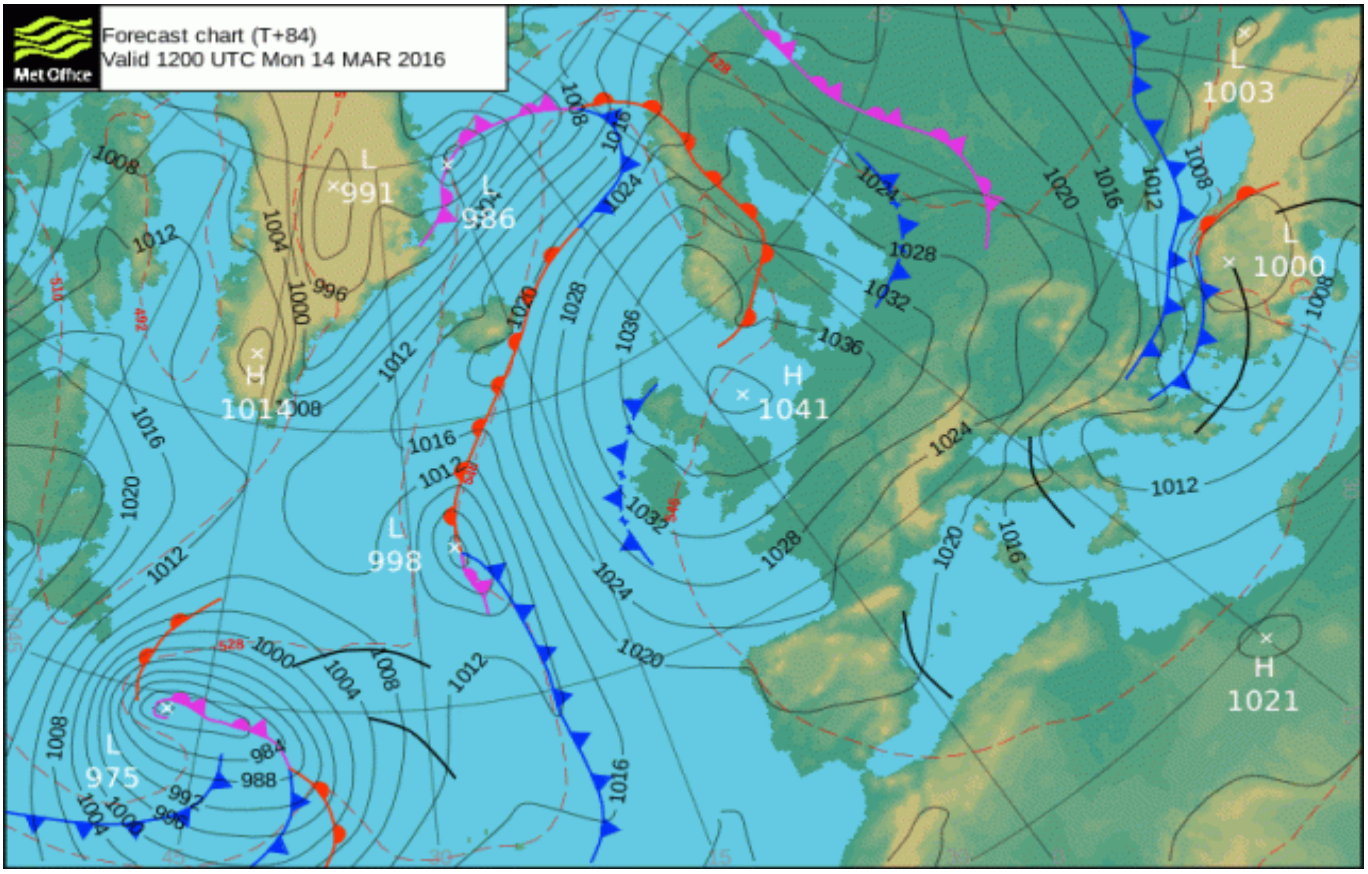
Date Created
March 2016

High pressure keeping things mostly settled

Description

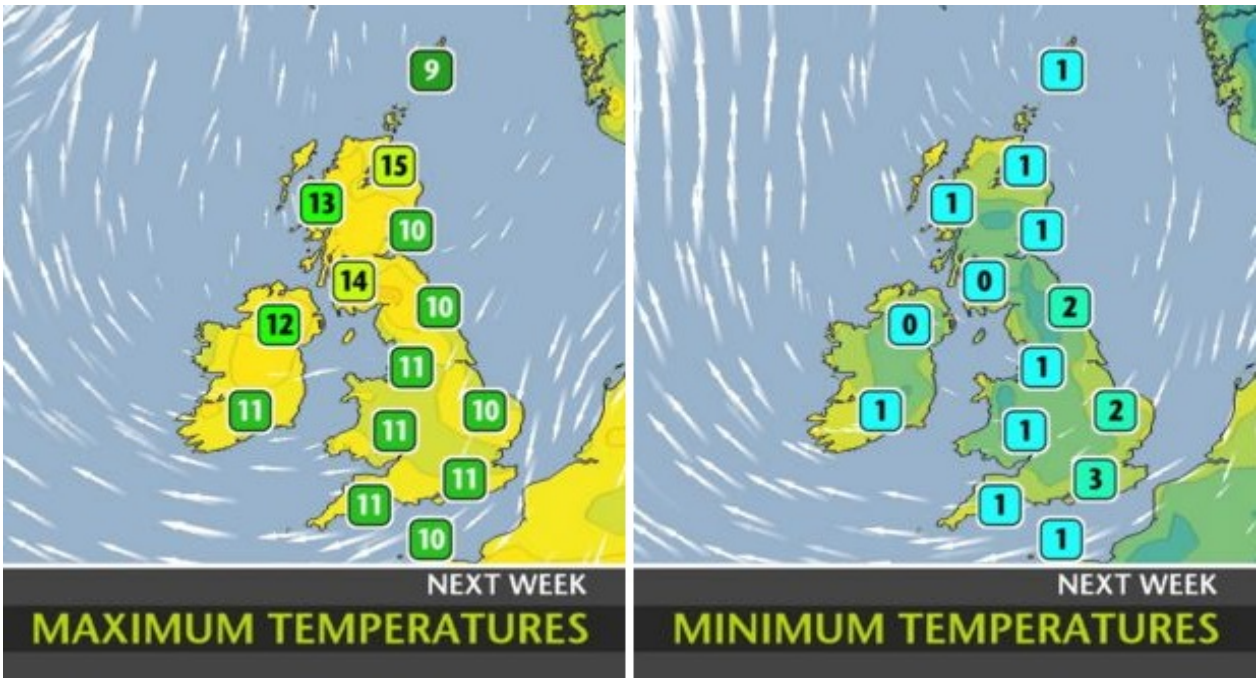
After the recent wet and windy weather we now have a period of calmer weather due to an area of high pressure that is pushing in from Scandinavia. Through today (Friday) and into the weekend a frontal system will bring some further rain for Northern Ireland and Scotland, but elsewhere it will be mostly dry.

By Monday many places will have a good deal of dry and fine weather as the high pressure will be centred in the North Sea, though it could also be rather cloudy at times. The pressure system will gradually move westwards, and will continue to dominate the weather across the UK through next week bringing further settled conditions.



Forecast surface pressure chart for Monday showing the high pressure in the North Sea

Daytime temperatures next week should be higher than of late, especially in the north where warmerair could well bring highs of 14 or 15C. Further south an east or north-easterly flow is likely to bring in slightly colder air from the continent and it may be cloudier here as well. Overnight temperatures are likely to drop, especially under any clear breaks, and so some frosts are still likely. The calm conditions also mean some fog is probable.



Forecast temperatures for next week

In a previous blog we talked about the current Sudden Stratospheric Warming (SSW) and this is linked to the weather we can expect over the next week or so.

The high pressure that is currently pushing into the North Atlantic is a common outcome from an SSW warming event. This will then bring an easterly air flow to the south through next week.

When an SSW occurs in the middle of winter it often leads to a cold snap for the UK. As it is occurring in the middle of March it means many will see some fine weather with some decent temperatures, especially in the best of the sunshine towards the north.

Keep up to date with the latest forecast information on our forecast pages, Facebook and Twitter sites and via our Weather App.

Date Created
March 2016

New Apprenticeship Programme launched

Description

The Met Office launched a new Apprenticeship Programme at the Exeter College Apprentice Expo, to recruit two apprentices who will join the Observations Team this September. This is the first apprenticeship scheme of its type at the Met Office.

The scheme will help ensure the organisation has engineers that are able to deliver the business needs in the future, and the Met Office is working with the Institute of Engineering and Technology with a view to provide an accredited Apprenticeship Programme.

For the apprentices the programme will be seen as the start of a career in electrical/electronic engineering with the organisation. They will study at Exeter College as well as attend placements around the Observations Team, being involved in new technologies, and general operation and maintenance practices.

If successful, the candidates will complete a full apprenticeship programme over a number of years starting with an NVQ Level 2, with the view to them completing a Level 4 NVQ by the end. Numerous posts will then be available both within Observations and other areas of the office.

At the launch, the Met Office Observations Group were presented with the Apprentice Torch in recognition of their efforts to set up this new Apprentice Programme.

The Met Office Observation Group were presented with the Apprentice Torch by John Laramy who will tak

More information about this Apprentice Programme and other vacancies within the Met Office can be found on our current vacancies page.

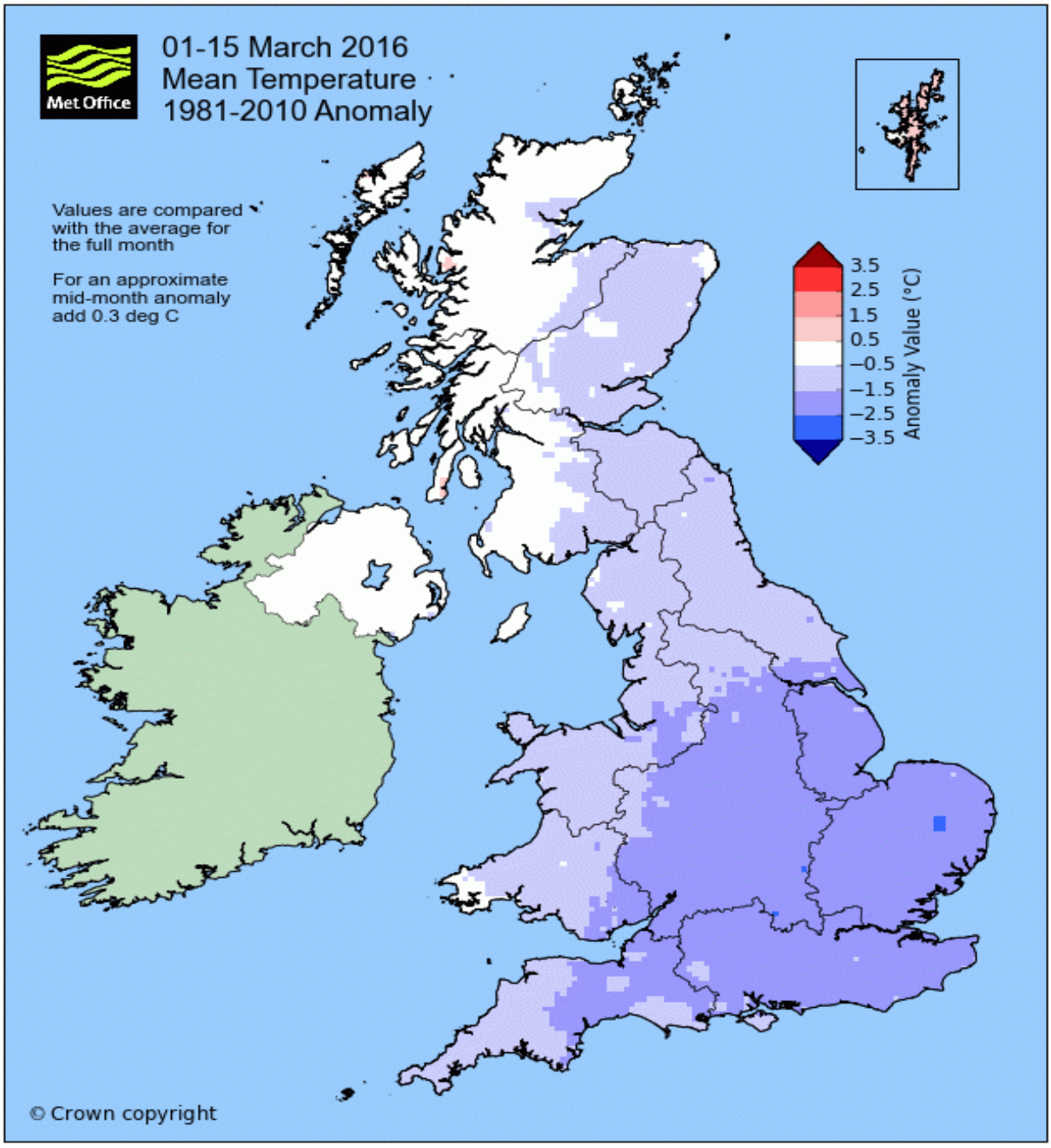
Date Created
March 2016

A chilly and wet start to March for some

Description

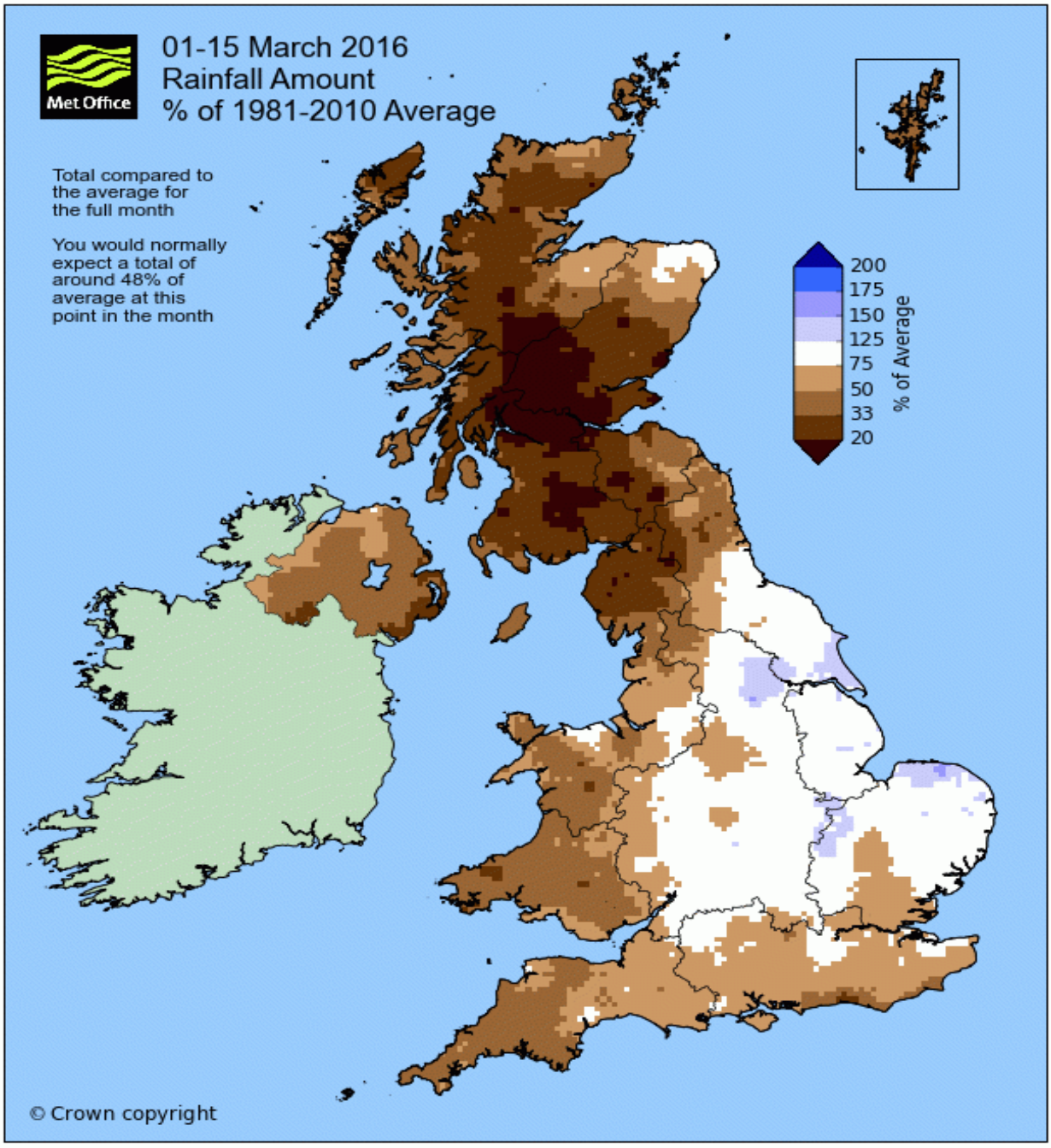
We've had quite a mixed bag of weather so far this month, and the statistics midway through represent that. The first ten days were rather unsettled with a series of Atlantic depressions including Storm Jake bringing spells of wet and windy weather – and some snow for northern areas. However, since then a blocking high has brought a lot of fine weather which has allowed for some pleasantly warm days but also chilly nights.

The statistics for 1-15 March show that temperatures across England were generally below average, by more than 2 °C for eastern parts. Wales and eastern Scotland were also slightly cooler than normal whilst the rest of Scotland and Northern Ireland were around average.



1 – 15 March 2016 mean temperature anomaly map

With the unsettled weather at the start of the month, parts of central and eastern England have already seen over their whole-month average rainfall. Elsewhere it's not been as wet with a swathe from the Lake District to the Highlands actually having had less rainfall than would be expected for this time of the month.



1 – 15 March 2016 rainfall anomaly map

Sunshine-wise we've had around normal amounts in most places, although some western areas have been a little brighter than average. This will be partly down to the recent high pressure that has brought settled conditions and the best of the sunshine in the west, whilst cloudier conditions have affected eastern areas.

	Mean Temperature		Sunshine Hours			Rainfall		
1-15 March 2016	**Actual**	**Diff to Avg**	**Actual**	**% of Avg**		**Actual**	**% of Avg**	

	degC	degC	hours	%	mm	%
UK	4.4	-1.1	55.3	54	44.1	46
England	4.6	-1.6	56.5	52	44.3	69
Wales	4.7	-1.1	54.9	54	52.9	45
Scotland	3.8	-0.4	53.7	58	41.8	30
N Ireland	5.9	0.0	54.4	56	41.2	43

Data from the Met Office's UK digitised records dates back to 1910. You can explore our climate data on our website. With half of the month still to go it's not possible to make claims about the whole of March.

The current forecast is for the blocking high to gradually break down as we go through the weekend and into next week. Friday and the weekend will be cloudier than recent days for many, but it should remain mostly dry. During next week we're likely to see some unsettled weather, particularly in the north and northeast.

Keep up to date with the latest forecast information on our forecast pages, Facebook and Twitter sites and via our Weather App.

Date Created
March 2016

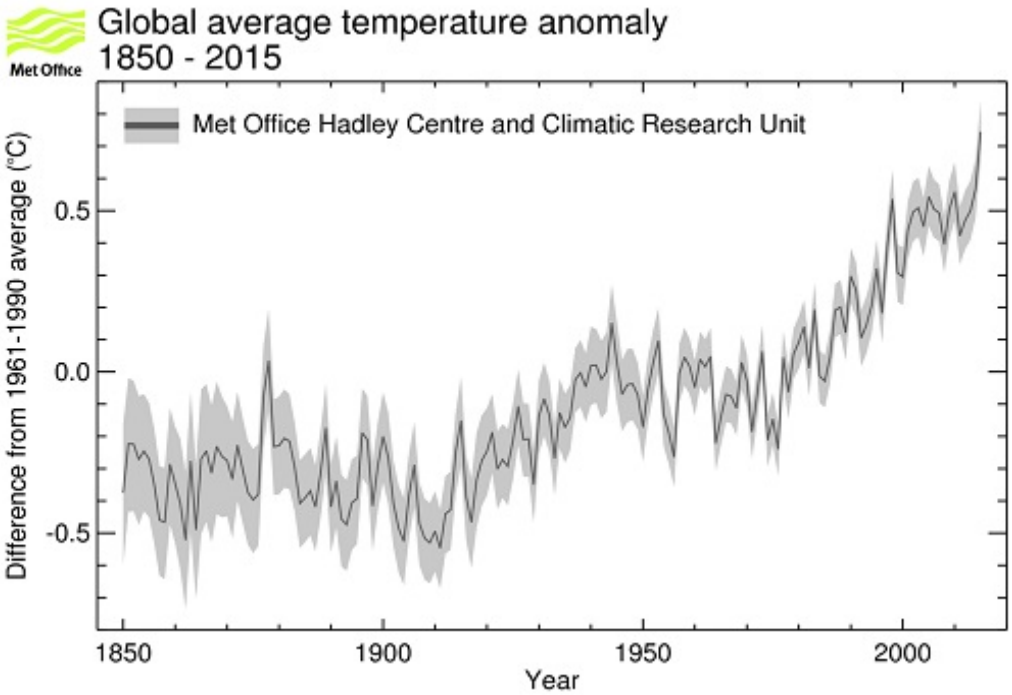
Celebrating the benefits of global working on World Meteorological Day

Description

Today is World Meteorological Day. Organised by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the theme of this year's day is: hotter; drier; wetter; face the future. These themes help to illustrate changes already observed in the world's climate, and they also signpost areas of future concern.

As widely reported at the beginning of this year, scientists from the Met Office Hadley Centre and the University of East Anglia's Climatic Research Unit showed that 2015 was probably the warmest year in a series dating back to at least 1850. Temperatures during 2015 were 0.75°C ±0.1 °C above the long-term (1961-1990) average.

When compared with the pre-industrial period, the 2015 average global temperature was around 1 °C above the long-term average from 1850 to 1900.



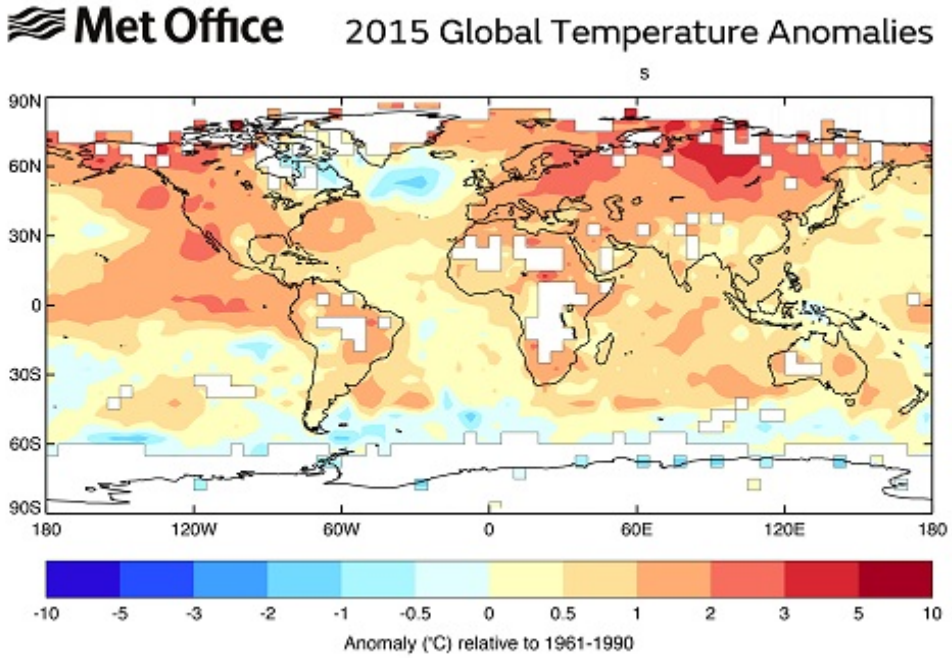
In 2015, the global mean temperature reached record levels in a series of records dating back to 1850.

Dr Peter Stott is head of climate monitoring and attribution at the Met Office Hadley Centre. He said: "2015 was a record-breaking year for our climate. Global mean temperatures reached 1 °C above pre-industrial levels for the first time and the year's average global temperature was the highest ever in instrumental records." The Met Office cites 1850-1900 as the most reliable reference period for pre-industrial times.

The powerful El Niño in the Pacific, bridging 2015 and 2016, has combined with a long-term rise in

global temperatures caused by anthropogenic greenhouse-gas emissions to create a record year. Professor Adam Scaife, who leads long range predictions, added: “With the delayed warming effect of El Niño it’s likely that 2016 may be another record year. After that we expect 2017 will end the run of record-breaking years, but the point remains that over time the planet is getting warmer and this trend is likely to continue.”

The effect of weather and climate in one part of the world can strongly influence what happens in another. With many parts of the world affected, El Niño is just one single, yet powerful, example of why it’s necessary to take a holistic view when looking at weather and climate.



Compared with the average for 1961-1990 there was variation of temperatures at the surface during 2015, with some areas, such as Siberia, being much warmer and parts of the North Atlantic being colder.

The WMO is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) with 191 Member States and Territories. It was established in 1950, based on the International Meteorological Organization (IMO), which was founded in 1873 to share weather information between countries. Today the WMO is the UN system’s authoritative voice on the state and behaviour of the Earth’s atmosphere, its interaction with the land and oceans, the weather and climate it produces and the resulting distribution of water resources.

To find out more about World Meteorological Day and the impacts of extreme weather events during 2015, please visit the website.

Date Created
March 2016

Spring isn’t the time to wind-up scheme for warning about storm-force winds

Description

Ensuring greater public safety and raising awareness of severe weather were two principles at the heart of the thinking behind the Name Our Storms initiative, devised and managed by the UK and Ireland’s National Met Services: the Met Office and Met Éireann.

Launched last year as a pilot project, Name Our Storms has seen 11 storms named where strong winds have affected the UK or Ireland. The series began with storm Abigail, which was named on 10 November.

Andy Page is a Chief Meteorologist at the Met Office. He said: “We have had a high level of engagement with the public since the creation of the Name Our Storms initiative. This feedback tells us that the system is helping to meet one of its key objectives of raising public awareness. However, as we move into spring, we’re increasingly being asked whether the trial should have stopped as many people seem to strongly associate wind storms with autumn and winter, than with spring.

“Well, meteorologically, it is fair to expect an increased frequency of storms during autumn and winter. But with Name Our Storms being such a valuable device, we didn’t feel it was appropriate to pack it away for the season while it is still performing a valuable service.

“Equally, most people could assume that you’re less likely to use an umbrella over the spring and summer, but most sensible people would keep one handy at any time of year in case it’s needed. That is how we feel about Name Our Storms.”

Storm Abigail was the first storm to be named under the Names Our Storms initiative. It was named on 10 November, 2015.

The criteria used for naming storms is based on our National Severe Weather Warnings service. This is based on a combination of both the impact the weather may have, and the likelihood of those impacts occurring.

For a storm to be named, it must be forecast to have a medium or high impact from strong winds.

Date Created
March 2016

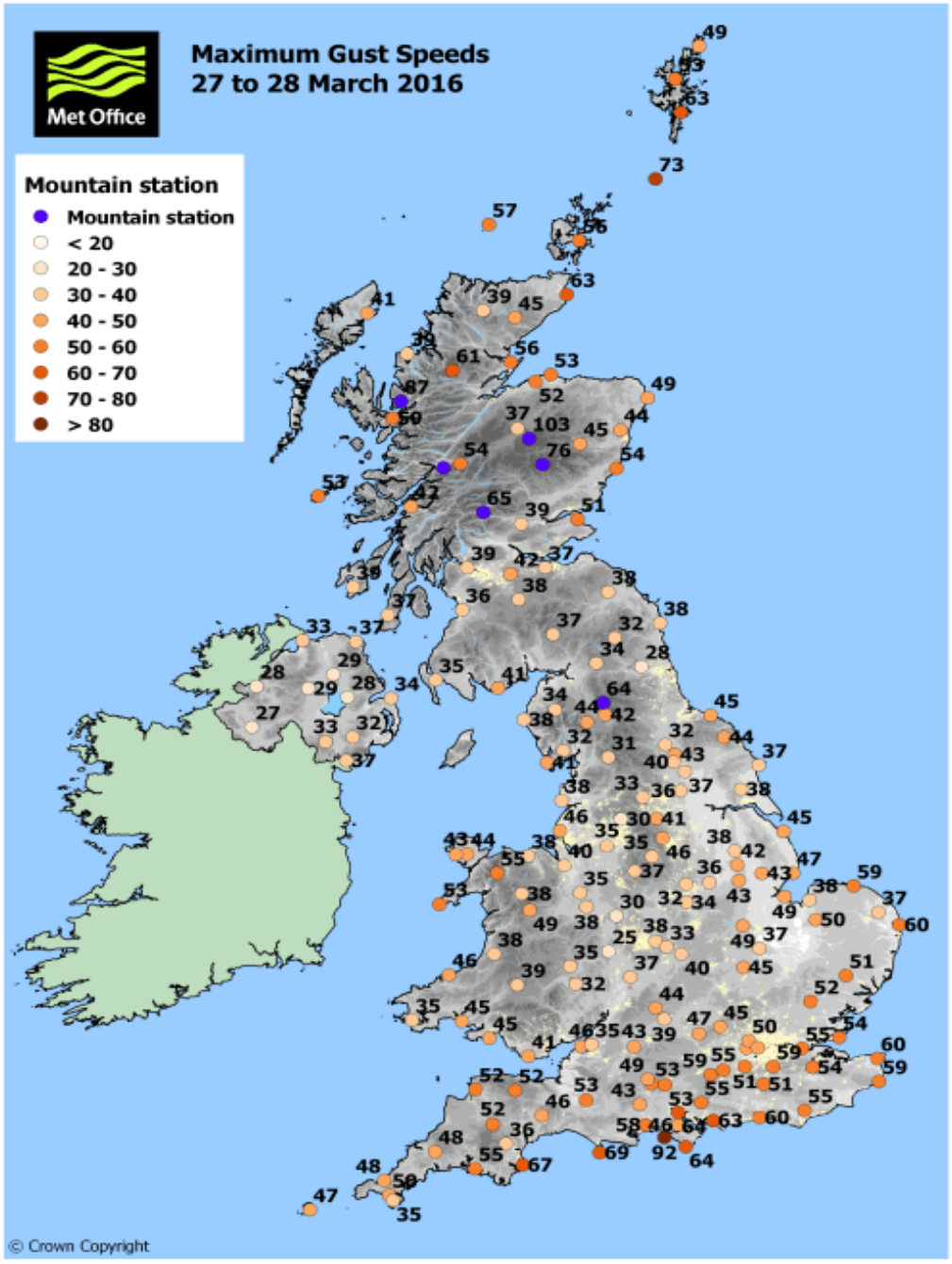
What Katie did – a review of Easter Monday’s storm Katie

Description

Storm Katie may never have been destined to be a record-breaker, but nonetheless she certainly swept dramatically over southern Britain during the night of Easter Sunday and into the morning on Easter Monday.

With her track across southern Britain, storm Katie – the 11th named storm since last autumn – first made landfall in Cornwall and then exited into the North Sea from the Lincolnshire coast during the latter part of the morning.

Mark Wilson is a Met Office forecaster. Reviewing the progress of storm Katie, he said: “The maximum gust speed recorded was 106 miles per hour at 5am on the Needles on the Isle of Wight. The Needles is a very exposed site and regularly records the strongest UK gust speeds. The speed of 74 miles per hour recorded at 7am at St Catherine’s Point on the island is more typical of values recorded elsewhere across southern England.



This map shows the maximum gust speeds recorded in Knots (Kt) across the UK during storm Katie. The maximum gust was 92 Ks, which equals 106 miles per hour.

“Given the southerly wind direction, it’s no surprise that most of the highest wind gust speeds were recorded in southern England. In fact most of the 30 UK stations recording the highest wind gust speeds are south of the M4 corridor.”

Along with the wind, the weather system associated with storm Katie also brought heavy rain. Up until 9am, Leek in Staffordshire had recorded 33mm of rain, while Exeter had recorded 26mm. Some places in the North Midlands and Wales also recorded snowfall overnight.

The progress of storm Katie on Easter Monday was covered by three National Severe Weather Warnings: including an Amber warning for wind in south-east England; and two seperate Yellow warnings covering swathes of southern Britain for both wind and rain.

Date Created
March 2016

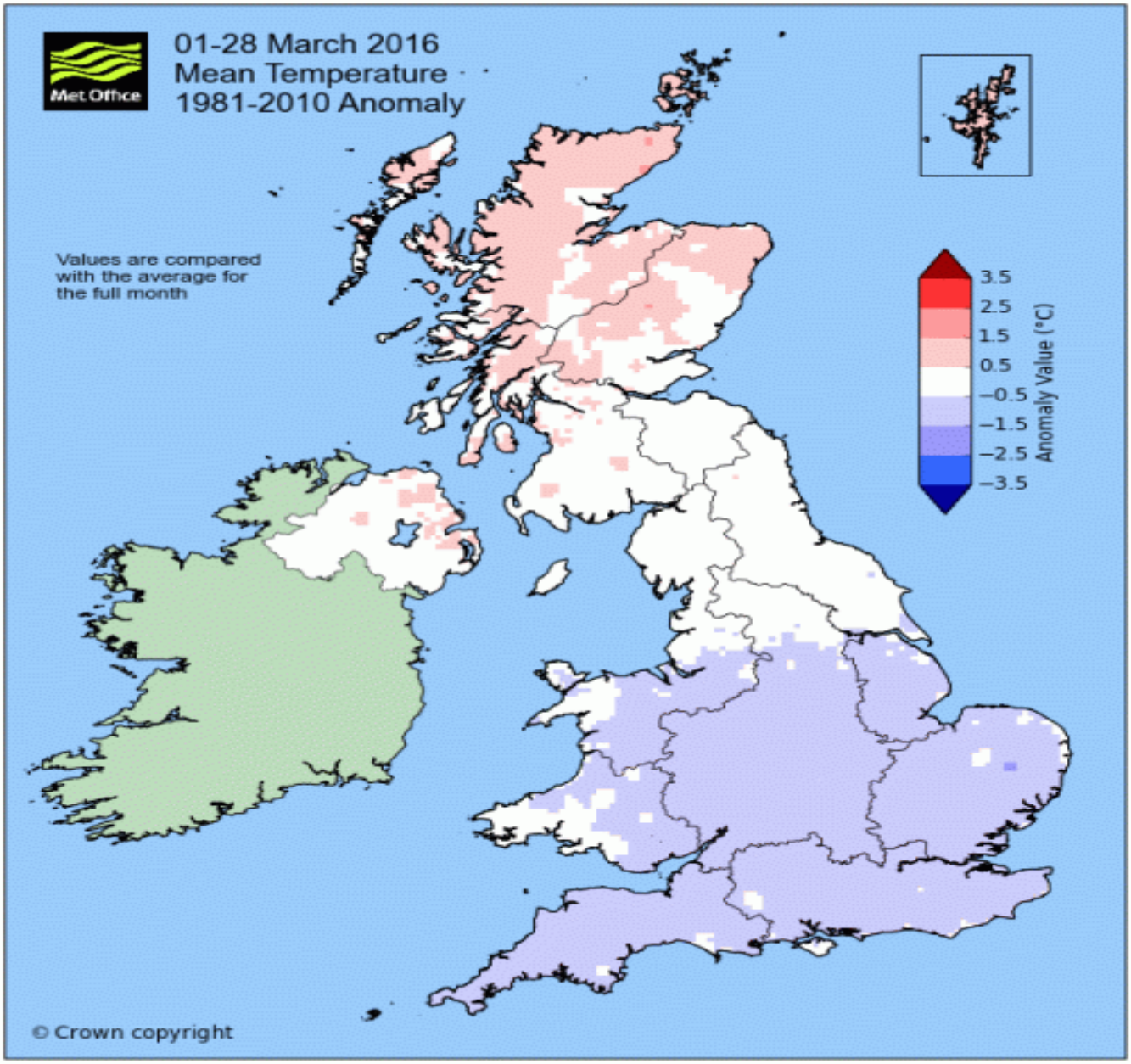
Topsy-turvy spell for the first month of Spring

Description

Provisional figures up until 28 March show that most of England has had a wetter than average March but parts of Scotland have been much drier than average. In this topsy-turvy set up, figures also show that the north of the UK enjoyed warmer than average conditions for the first month of Spring.

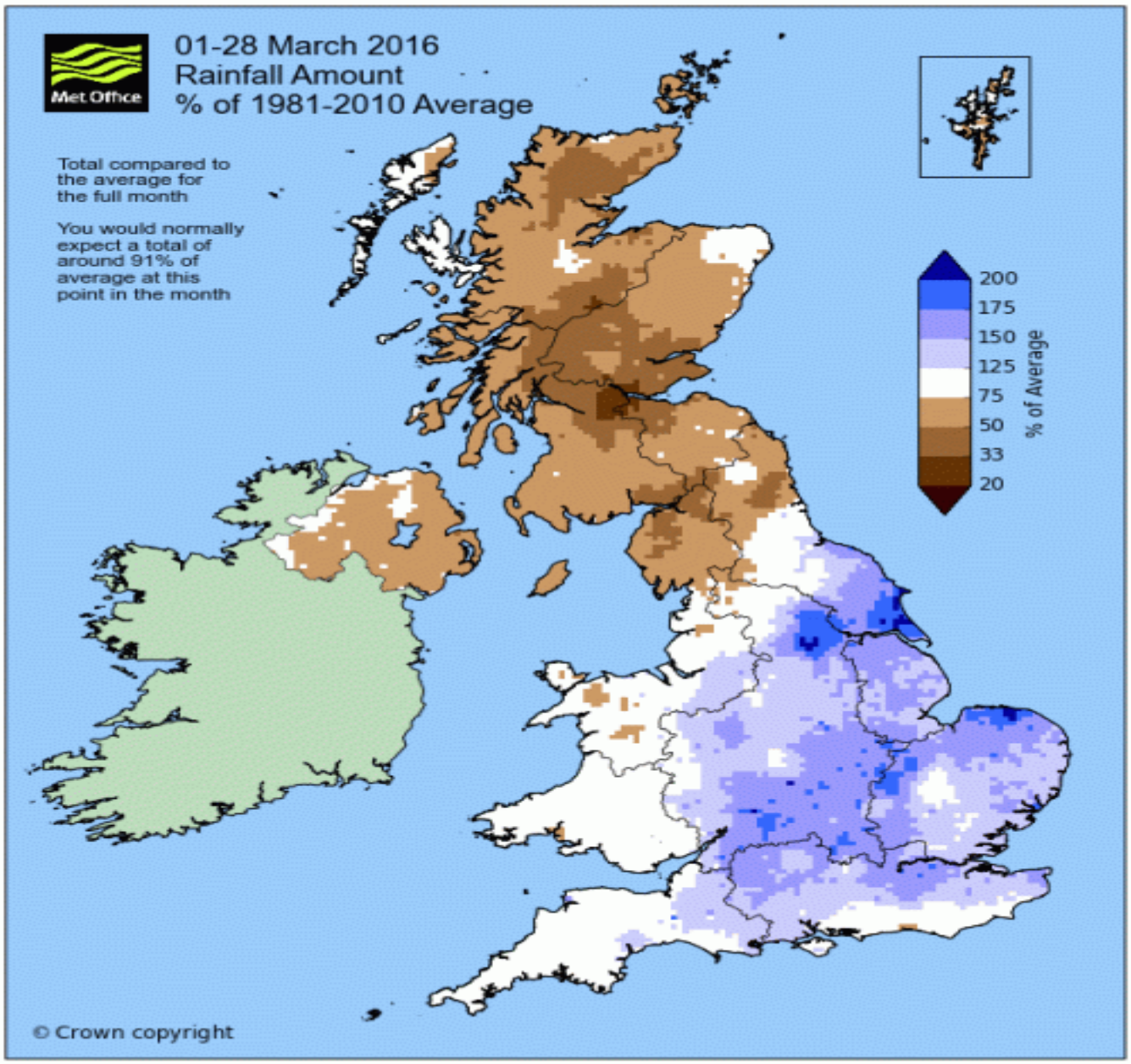
March roared in with unsettled weather in the first 10 days, with rain at times and strong winds on 2 March resulting in Storm Jake. After that an anticyclone built over the UK, with settled weather over all areas. As is typical during Spring, when the sun is strong enough to bring warmth but the air is still cold, there were some large diurnal ranges between maximum and minimum temperatures. There were some cold nights with widespread frosts for many, but with daytime temperatures rising to the mid teens in some locations. Towards the end of the month, the two weeks of settled, high pressure conditions gave way to much more unsettled weather with Storm Katie on 28 March bringing damaging winds and a highest recorded gust of 106mph on the Isle Of Wight.

The figures up until 28 March show that temperatures across the north of the UK were a little above average in comparison to the south of the UK where it was cooler. Overnight minimum temperatures in particular across England and Wales were below the norm, with the clear skies associated with high pressure allowing temperatures to dip overnight.



Most of England has had a wetter than average March, particularly across the Midlands and some eastern districts, but on the whole, Scotland has been much drier than average. Wales has had near normal rainfall along with South West England. Sunshine has generally been around average with slightly more in South West England and less sunshine down the east coasts of England and Scotland.

The north-south split in the rainfall distribution can be explained by two wet spells of weather, one on 8-9 March and again in association with Storm Katie on the 27-28 March. Many historic counties in the south recorded wetter than average totals with some locations in the north receiving less than 60% of the typical rainfall totals for March. Kinross recorded 34.9mm rain, only 35% of the March average, whereas Northamptonshire recorded 77.6mm, 169% of average.


Met Office
01-28 March 2016
Rainfall Amount
% of 1981-2010 Average
Total compared to the average for the full month
You would normally expect a total of around 91% of average at this point in the month
200
175
150
125
75
50
33
20
% of Average
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EARLY	maximum temperature		minimum temperature		mean temperature		sunshine duration		precipitation	
1-28 March 2016	Act	Anom (8110)	Act	Anom (8110)	Act	Anom (8110)	Act	Anom (8110)	Act	Anom (8110)
	degC	degC	degC	degC	degC	degC	hours	%	mm	%
Regions										
UK	8.8	-0.1	1.8	-0.3	5.3	-0.2	98.2	97	80.0	84
England	9.2	-0.6	1.9	-0.7	5.5	-0.7	102.9	96	76.8	120
Wales	8.7	-0.3	1.8	-0.8	5.2	-0.6	101.7	100	107.8	92
Scotland	8.0	0.7	1.4	0.3	4.7	0.5	90.2	97	80.8	57
N Ireland	9.6	0.4	2.6	0.1	6.1	0.3	94.5	97	64.7	68

Please note these provisional figures, especially for rainfall and sunshine are subject to revision. Anomaliesare expressed relative to the 1981-2010 averaging period.

Scotland recorded the highest UK temperature of the month at Braemar, Aberdeenshire on 17 March of 18.7C. In contrast Altnaharra, Sutherland, also in Scotland, recorded the lowest UK night time temperature of -8.1C on 10 March. Other countries in the UK recorded the following highs and lows:

England: Pershore, Hereford and Worcestershire (1 March) 15.6C and Benson, Oxfordshire (8 March) -7.1C.

Wales: Porthmadog, Gwynedd (13 March) 16.2C and Sennybridge, Powys (13 March) -4.7C

Northern Ireland: Giant’s Causeway, Antrim (12 March 15.0C) and Katesbridge, Down (18 March) -5.6C.

Date Created
March 2016